A

BESOME

Of Truth, To Sweep away

The Refuge of LIES,

OR,

Something in Answer to one *Francis Holdcraft* (Priest) a Prisoner in *Cambridge* Castle; who hath belyed and slandered, and falsly accused an Innocent people, in Twelve parcels of Paper; But his Lies and false Accusations are Swept away, and the Truth of their Doctrine cleared and Vindicated; And his Lying confused Spirit Reproved:

Also the Ground of the Difference

shewed between the people (in scorn called *Quakers*) and some other separated people: With a few words of good Counsel unto all people into whose hands this may come.

By a follower of the Lamb through the great Tribulation,

John Ayrsley.

London, Printed in the Year 1674.

A

BESOME

Of Truth, To Sweep away

The Refuge of LIES,

OR,

Something in Answer to one Francis Holdcraft (Priest) a Prisoner in Cam-

bridge Gaole; who hath belyed and slandered, and falsly accused an Innocent people, in Two of his parcels of Paper; But his Lies and false Accusations are Swept away, and the Truth of their Doctrine cleared and Vindicated; And his Lying confuted by

Spirit Reproved:

Also the Ground of the Difference

viewed betwixt the people (in scorn called Quakers) and some other Separated people; With a few words of good Counsel unto all people into whose hands this may come.

By a follower of the Lamb through the great Tribulation,

London, Printed in the Year 1654.

A Besome of Truth to Sweep away the Re-fuge of Lyes.

DEVONSHIRE HOUSE
Reference
Library
12 BISHOPSGATE WITHOUT E.C.

MAny are the Enemies which are and have been in all Ages of Gods Truth and people; And many have been the Lies, Slanders, and false Accusations which hath followed the Lords Appearance in all Generations; for it hath been the work of false Prophets and Antichrists Priests, to speak all manner of evil falsly without a cause, thinking thereby to cover their own Deceit and Hypocrisie, with Revilings, and slandring of the Innocent, speaking Lies in hypocrisie; And Truth always suffered by that Generation of Priests, under the name of *Error*; and the Professors thereof, and the walkers therein, under the name of *Heretick*; else could they never have effected their ends, to have brought them to the fire as they have done many of the precious servants of the Lord, even in every age; And great hath been the opposition which the appearance of God in this age (in his innocent people) hath met withal, even from men of all Ranks and Sects, but more especially from the Parish Priests, as may largely be made appear: As Instance, A Petition from them to the then Parliament, Crying out against them as Heretick and Deceivers; and crying for help from them against this poor and despised people, whose Doctrine and Principle was almost every where spoken against, and but then a very few in number in comparison of the multitude of Priests and their followers, which was then against them; yet they was not able to quench the Spirit by which they spake, because they spake with Authority, and not as the Scribes; therefore they cryed out to the Magistrates to help them, though no hand was lifted up against them, though many times they have been sorely beaten, stoned, stocke, whipped, scoffed, scorned, and imprisoned, and that by the high Priests themselves, who have set on their rude people to do it; Nay, I may truly say, most of all the persecutions that this innocent people hath past under [illegible] tion,

tion, hath been occasioned by the Priests, who hath not only stirred up the Magistrates (as being the chief weapon that ever they used) but also by their Lies, slanders, false Accusations, and Reproachful tearms, which they Pamphleted abroad, to raise up the rude multitude against them, and also to beget a dislike in the hearts of all people of the way and doctrine of Truth which these people walk in and hold forth, calling the Light of Christ *Error* and *Heresie*, and saying they deny the man Christ, his Death and Resurrection; and that he is at the right hand of his Father in the Heavens, and that they deny his Ordinances and Scriptures, among whom I meet with one *Francis Holdcraft* as none of the least of these Lyers, and false accusers, being as a Bryer in a thorn hedge, or as the Viper which came out of the fire and seized upon *Pauls* hand: But his Bundle of Lies, slanders, and false accusations, the Lord God will sweep away with the Besome of his destruction, by which he will cleanse the Land of evil doers, Lyers, slanderers and Backbiters, and he will also clear the innocency of his own people, and the Truth of their Doctrine, and they also will shake off this Viper of his as they have done many more; and the minds of the people he hath deceived (will be changed) and instead of calling them Error, they shall see them to be the Truth of God as it is in Jesus; And this *Francis Holdcraft* shall then see and be confounded, if he do not speedily repent, but it is greatly to be feared that this *Francis Holdcraft* hath his heart hardened, and his conscience seared as with a hot Iron, and is accustomed to evil, in that he hath so long continued opposing of the Truth of God, and hath at last shewed himself in twelve prodigious Pamphlets of Paper, wherein, though confusedly, yet very impudent wickedly, hath he belyed Gods servants, and laboured what in him lay, to pervers the Right way of God, and to turn the Truth into a lye; And hath reproachfully belyed the dead, which is not here to answer for himself, as instances *James Naylor*, in whose life time he nor none of his generation was able to withstand (while he stood in the power of God) but was confounded by the power and Spirit of God manifested in him in his day; and amongst the many Lies, slanders, & false Accusations his Papers are stuft withal, which are as the Frogs that

 covered

covered the land of Egypt, or as the Locusts which came out of the bottomless pit, or as the smoke that darkened the Air, this is one, That our Principles doth agree with the Jew and the Turk; for saith he, These deny Christ come in the flesh, viz. the Jew and the Turk; The Quaker saith he, when they first arose and spoke plainly, they made Christs birth and Death but a figure; herein saith he, the Jew and the Turk and the Quaker doth agree. Here is all of substance that I can find, so far as I have read his Papers; the rest & this also, is a heap of Confusion, Lies, slanders and false Reports, which he hath raked up out of the unclean Channels of his corrupt heart, and gathered from the mouths of that lying Spirit, which is entred into, and hath its seat in that Sect; of which he is the head, more then any other that I know of; for certainly he, with many more which I might mention of his Brotherhood, makes it their worke to bely the Truth and people of God, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, *Because I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you; And all manner of evil shall they speak of you falsly for my sake, because they have not known the Father nor me.* And now I shall speak something in Answer to this false Accusation, viz.

Wherein doth the Jew and Turk agree with us? Thou saist they deny Christ come in the flesh; We do not deny Christ come in the flesh (let all people witness for us that we have known our Doctrine and manner of life) but do confess unto all the world that he is come and coming, and every eye shall see him, and he shall judge thy lying, Reviling spirit as an enemy unto his appearance, in that the day of his glorious rising, in which he is discovering the deceitful working of Antichrist in thee and thy followers, who confess him in words, but in life and power, and practice, doth deny him; and are the greatest enemies he hath in this Nation, like as the Scribes, Pharisees and High Priests was in the day of his flesh, who put him to death, though they looked for a Messiah, and had *Moses* and the Prophets Writings, which did declare of the coming of the just One, yet by them they could not see nor believe in him, no more then you now in this day of his second coming, can believe and receive him, though you have the Prophets and Apostles Writings, for they only testifie of him, but could not give [illegible] ledge

ledge of him, neither faith to believe in him; for it is the Light that shineth in heart that giveth the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus; and Faith is the gift of God, which cannot be received by the reading of the Scripture, for it cometh by hearing, not by reading; And as for us, we believe and confess unto all the world, that there is no salvation in any other but in this Jesus, who was born of the Virgin *Mary*, and was crucified without the Gates of *Jerusalem*, and rose again the third day, and did talk with his Disciples as they went going to *Emaus*; but they did not know him; and that he came in amongst them, the doors being shut; and that he said *Mary, touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my father*; and the same that Descended Ascended unto the right hand of God in the Heavens; and this also we believe, That he is come again, and coming; for certainly we did not know him but as he was revealed in us: And as for the Turk and Jews, I know not what they believe, I shall leave them to answer for themselves, only this is my faith concerning them, That many of them is nearer the Kingdom of Heaven, then this man and such as he, and will sooner enter into it; for Whoremongers and Adulterers shall enter into the Kingdom of God before such Pharisees and Hypocrites.

And again in the same Page he saith, The Turk and the Jew and the Quaker doth agree, they disallowing in principle of that Stone which the Builders did refuse, they deny that man Christ Jesus, *Emanuel*, *God with us*, that is now at the right hand of the Father in the Heavens, and presently after in the same Page he saith, The Jews and the Turks look not for salvation in any other then in this Jesus of *Nazareth* the son of man; The Quakers therein agree with them in principle, they deny the Rock, which is the Person of Christ.

Answ. Oh heap of Confusion and Nonsence! was there ever such Hodge podge committed to writing by any man that hath his senses? surely he that hath but half an eye may see from whence this comes, even out of the womb of confusion, and the Brat of *Babylon*, for it will not cover thy nakedness, but it openly appears; And I believe there is some of thy hearers will be ashamed of this ill-favoured Harlot.

And

And as for the Rock which thou saist is the Person of Christ, the Rock Christ we own, which was before he had a body, upon which the Prophets and the holy men of God in the days past was builded, and which followed Israel of old; for they all did drink of the same spiritual Rock which followed them, which Rock was Christ, as it is written, 1 Cor. 10. 4. as for the word Person, which thou so often uses in thy Writings, it is thy own imagination; for I find it not at all Recorded in the Scripture; and thou to lay thy own Imaginations for a foundation is an absurd thing, and manifests thy folly and ignorance; for another foundation can no man lay, then that which is already laid, which is Christ Jesus, as in 1 Cor. 9. 11.

And as for thy Groanings and Conflicts which thou saist that thou hadst (when the Lord did first appear in his glorious manifesting of himself in his people in the Northern parts) The cause of thy Groanings and Conflicts was because thou refused his Appearance in thy self, who would have done thee good, and quickened thy soul from death, as he hath done many in this day of his glorious Appearance and Visitation of the sons of men; but thou with many more would not have him to rule over you, and it is to be feared that such hath sleighted the day of their Visitation, and thine and their sad state is to be lamented; and you may be wept over, even as *Jerusalem* was, for the Beast and false Prophet which is seated in thy heart, was loft to loose their hold, or that the kingdom of Antichrist should fall, who hath been so beneficial to all his Ministers, in giving them such great Benefits, and large Revenues, so that many of them are like fatted Horses, being fed with the fattest of the Meat, and clothed with the finest of the Wool; they may easily be known by their Idleness and delicious faring, having many Benefactors for their bellies from every Quarter; Among whom I find this *Francis Holdcraft* none of the least, notwithstanding his fair speeches and pretended sufferings, for so I may truly call them (pretended sufferings) for he hath no testimony to bear for the Lord; for when he is called before the Rulers of this world, he commits his Cause not unto the Lord, but unto Lawyers, and thus he betrays himself and his followers, and gives their enemies an advantage against them, having

no

no other weapons to war against them then that which they have in their own hand, Christ and his Apostles did not so, they went bold and valient, and pleaded their own cause, and had the Lord also to plead for them, and had a witness in every mans conscience to plead their Innocency, and so in this day by those whom Christ hath raised up, who are bold and valiant, not fearing what man can do, neither dare they go down unto Egypt for help, nor put their confidence in the arm of flesh, neither take thought what to say, but as the Lord gives wisdom and utterance so they speak, and they have a witness in every mans conscience, and their innocency pleads their cause, so that the Lord God his appearance is much seen amongst them by their undaunted courage and meek behaviour, and patient suffering all things, giving their backs to the smiter, and their Cheeks to those that have pulled off the hair. And it is to be observed among this people, that their countenance did never fall, neither were they ever put to flight, nor the least give way to any fear or deceit whereby their enemies could have any advantage against them. And it is further observed, that in all these times of Tryal they have never removed their publick Meetings, neither changed the time, nor place, but rather hath appeared more publick; and the Lord God hath raised up a greater Zeal amongst them, which their persecutors have taken great notice of, to their great discouragement; and the Innocency of this people is in a great measure made known unto all people, yea unto their persecutors, which hath raised a love and pitty in their hearts towards them many times, that they have said, That what they have acted against them was contrary to their minds, but that they were forced to it; So that all that hath come to pass concerning this people, the Lord hath caused it to work for good unto them in all their Tryals and Tribulations, and hath incouraged them in all well doing, in their faithful and true Testimony which he hath given them to bear, and hath to this day appeared for them, in taking of their parts in all their Distresses, both of body and mind; and hath so far brought his own purpose to pass in them, that they fear not what man can do unto them, neither in body or Estate, neither do they love their lives un-

to the Death; That they may finish their Course with joy, and run the race which is set before them with chearfulness having the Mark of the high Calling of Jesus always before them, and the reward always in their Bosoms, so that they rejoyce that the Lord hath raised them up, and counted them worthy to bear witness to his living truth wch they have been eye-witnesses of from the beginning, by all which it doth evidently appear that they are the People, and Saints, and Servants of the most high God, and that they above all the families of the earth, he hath chosen to place his name in; for they have both heard his voice and seen his shape: Therefore the voice of a stranger they cannot follow, neither bow to the likeness of any thing in heaven above, or the earth beneath, but is made willing in this the day of his power to forsake all and follow the Lamb through the great Tribulations, that the sufferings that is yet behind of the body his Church might be filled up, and others seeing their faithfulness and patience in their sufferings, and their boldness and Zeal for the Lord in this trying-day, is provoked thereby unto jealousie; And many by their good Conversation is won unto Christ, and glorifies our Father which is in heaven, unto whom be all the glory, and pure praises, and honour given and rendred by me and all his Elect seed for evermore.

Now it may be quæried by many sober minded people what is the ground of the difference between this *Francis Holdcraft* and these people called Quakers, seeing they are both sufferers together and separates from the Church of England; or what should move this *Francis Holdcraft* to write so many Papers against this people, seeing they have so many enemies already, and are the only people that is persecuted, that bears the weight and burthen (for all others) in the heat of the day, who alone are found faithful in their tryals, and is upheld by the power of God in all the violent tempests that to this day is come to try their foundation; so that the eyes of many people is upon them, and the desire of thousands is for them that they may still be upheld in their Testimony; that they that are yet afar off may be brought near, and others that are already brought near, may be made to partake with them of their reward; for it is generally believed by many, and well known to some sober minded people, that they seek

ſeek the good of all, and would do unto all men as they would men ſhould do unto them,

To this may be anſwered he that is born after the fleſh always perſecuted him that was born after the ſpirit: and this was firſt ſeen in *Cain* and *Abel*, two of the firſt that did ſacrifice, ſomething there was then that put a difference between their Offerings, for it is ſaid the Lord had reſpect unto *Abel* and his Offering, but not unto *Cain* and his Offering: And this is the very ground of the matter between *Francis Holdcraft* and his Brethren and the people which is in ſcorn called Quakers, for God hath reſpect unto them and their Offering, but not unto *Francis Holdcraft* and his Offering, therefore is he riſen up in great wrath againſt this people, but this that puts the difference betwixt Offering and Offering many people are yet ſtrangers unto, and it is very needful that it be known; for in vain doth people offer ſacrifices while God hath no reſpect unto them, for what is the Chaff to the Wheat, or what is the form where the power is wanting, or what will it avail any though they give their goods to the poor and their bodies to be burnt, if they want Charity. Now I may ſpeak to inform the minds of the ſimple, honeſt hearted in few words: There is a ſeed which God hath ſowen in the hearts of all people, and this is *Abel* or *Jacob*, and as this is felt in the heart of any to offer unto the Lord, this is that which he hath reſpect unto, and which his love is unto, as in *Rom.* 9. 13. For it is ſaid, *Jacob have I loved, but Eſau have I hated*. Now this is nothing to them that hold a particular Election of perſons, for this is a ſeed, and the promiſe is not unto ſeeds as unto many, but unto the ſeed which is Chriſt; for the Apoſtle ſpeaking of them in the womb calls them two Nations or two Seeds: Now the other ſeed which the enemy ſoweth, which is called *Cain* or *Eſau* being the firſt-born, and that which is moſt forward to offer, this is alſo in every mans heart (I mean in unregenerate men) and this the Lord hath no reſpect unto, though it faſt and pray, and preach never ſo much, for this is that which God hateth and is reprobated, for I will put enmmity ſaith the Lord betwixt thy ſeed and her ſeed: And theſe two can never bereconciled together, neither the people which are of theſe contrary ſeeds, for Light and Darkneſs cannot agree, where Chriſt the Light the

seed of the Woman is felt in the heart to bear Rule; Darkneſs and Enmity is done away, and he is the one Offering which the Father hath reſpect unto for in him only he is well-pleaſed, and with them alone that hear and follow him, and is obedient unto his appearance in them, and doth whatſoever he doth command them.

And all Dear people into whoſe hands this may come, wait to feel this Seed in your hearts; for it is this that begets all the breathings and deſires in your hearts after the Lord; I ſay, wait that ye may become acquainted with it, for it is the Elect Seed of bleſſing, and in it is all the promiſes of God, yea and Amen; herein waiting will you make your Calling and Election ſure; for in it ſhall all the Nations of the earth be bleſſed; And except it had been for this bleſſed Seed we had all been like *Sodom*; but bleſſed be the Lord who hath left us a Seed, and Called and Elected many in it, and is yet calliug and electing many more: for this is the Seed by which he wil repleniſh the earth, and them that are joined to it, when he will Sweep the Land of evil doers: But ſome may ſay how ſhall we know this Seed of bleſſing, this Elect Seed? ye ſhall know it by its Meekneſs, Gentleneſs, Patience, long ſuffering, and its breathing after God always, and cannot be ſatisfied in any thing below him; neither feed upon that which dyes of it ſelf, but it is its meat and drink to do the will of God; Oh wait to know ſuch a thing in your hearts, and joyn your ſelves to it, that ye may be accepted in it, then will ye be one in heart with all Gods people, and the ground of difference and various offerings will be taken away, and the one offering will be known, and the Sacrifice which the Father accepteth, and the Return from the Father will be felt in the hearts, and bleſſings and peace will be your portion, with all the reſt of the children of the Kingdom, who are ſet down with *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Jacob*, in the Manſion which Chriſt hath prepared; Oh Dear people, this is the Pearl of great price, which all is to be ſold for, even that which is called the leaſt of Seeds, yet it becomes the greateſt of Plants in them that believe; for it is the Lord alone that cauſeth it to proſper, and ſhowers down his bleſſings upon it, ſo it becomes as the Trees planted by the River ſide, that brings forth its fruit in due ſeaſon, whoſe Leaf ſhall not

never wither; but the Leaves of this Tree is for the healing of the Nations. So blessed and happy are they in whose hearts life is put forth and prospereth, even so do thou arise, oh my God, for the gathering in of this scattered Seed, even so be it. Amen.

J. A.

Cambridge *Castle, the Seventh Moneth, 1664. Where I remain Prisoner for the word of God, and Testimony of Jesus, during the good pleasure of the Lord, and am well content in his will.*

THE END.

CHRISTIAN Tolleration.

OR

Simply and singly to meet upon the Account of Religion, really to Worship and serve the Lord, without any unlawful Act to be done or intended, is not an Offence against Law.

And also concerning Seditious Sectaries, disloyal Persons, and Seditious Conventicles punishable by the late Act. And likewise concerning Banishment; For no man by the Law of the Land ought to be Banished out of his Native Country for the service and Worship of God; Or as hereafter Appeareth.

Written in the eighth Month 1664. by R. F